

13. **(Currently Amended)** A virtual file system for storing data files among a plurality of modular storage units, the virtual file system comprising:

a plurality of storage units configured to:

store blocks;

receive a data file read request;

retrieve location data information corresponding to the requested data file, wherein the location data information includes storage location information about blocks that correspond to the requested data file, wherein blocks that correspond to a single copy of the requested data file are distributed among two or more storage units;

retrieve locally stored blocks; and

request remotely stored blocks.

14. **(Currently Amended)** The virtual file system of Claim 13, wherein the storage units include a storage device and a processing module, wherein the locally stored data is stored on the storage device, and the processing module retrieves the locally stored blocks from the storage device.

15. **(Currently Amended)** The virtual file system of Claim 13, further comprising a write module in communication with the switch component, wherein the write module is configured to receive a data file write request and to determine the storage location of a plurality of blocks that correspond to the data file write request.

16. **(Currently Amended)** The virtual file system of Claim 15, wherein the write module is further configured to distribute the plurality of blocks among at least two of the plurality of storage units.

Please cancel Claims 21-42.

Please add the following new claims, Claims 43-58:

43. **(New)** The distributed file system of Claim 1, wherein a file has been stored on a number of intelligent storage devices, wherein the number is determined specifically for the file, and wherein the number is equal to or greater than two.

44. **(New)** The virtual file system of Claim 13, wherein the blocks include content data.

45. (New) The virtual file system of Claim 13, wherein the blocks include metadata.

46. (New) The virtual file system of Claim 13, wherein the number of storage units on which the blocks are stored has been determined specifically for the data file.

47. (New) A method for storing a file among at least two of a plurality of storage modules, the method comprising:

receiving a request to store a file;

storing a first portion of the file on a first storage module;

storing a second portion of the file on a second storage module;

wherein the first portion is different from the second portion; and

storing address information about where the first portion and second portion were stored, whereby the file may be retrieved as a single file.

48. (New) The method of Claim 47, wherein the address information is stored among at least two of the plurality of storage modules.

49. (New) The method of Claim 47, further comprising storing a copy of the first portion of the file on a third storage module; and storing a copy of the second portion of the file on a fourth storage module, wherein the third storage module is different from the fourth storage module.

50. (New) The method of Claim 49 further comprising storing copy address information about where the copy of the first portion and the copy of the second portion were stored.

51. (New) The method of Claim 50, wherein the copy address information is stored among at least two of the plurality of storage modules.

52. (New) The method of Claim 47 further comprising generating error correction data for the file.

53. (New) The method of Claim 52 further comprising storing a first portion of the error correction data among at least two of the plurality storage modules.

54. (New) A distributed file system comprising:

a plurality of storage modules,

a file, wherein the file is divided into portions, and the portions are stored among at least two of the plurality of storage modules; and

metadata stored in the distributed file system related to the file, wherein the metadata identifies where the portions are stored.

55. (New) The distributed file system of Claim 54 wherein at least a first portion of the file is stored on a first one of the plurality of storage modules at least a second portion of the file is stored on a second one of the plurality of storage modules, wherein the first one of the plurality of storage modules is different from the second one of the plurality of storage modules, and the first portion of the file is different from the second portion of the file.

56. (New) The distributed file system of Claim 54, wherein the metadata is stored among at least two of the plurality of storage units.

57. (New) The distributed file system of Claim 54, wherein the metadata further includes error correction data.

58. (New) The distributed file system of Claim 54 further comprising a copy of the file, wherein the copy of the file is stored among at least two of the plurality of storage units.